

# 101 Uses *for an* Old Farm Tractor



Michael Dregni, Editor



# 101 Uses <sup>for an</sup> Old Farm Tractor

---

Voyageur Press

Who knew there were so many uses for an old farm tractor? We've gleaned 101 fun, amusing ideas for interesting uses for that old farm tractor sitting in the yard or rusting in the field. They may just inspire you to come up with some uses of your own!

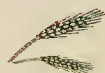








# 101 Uses *for an* Old Farm Tractor



Voyageur Press









Copyright © 2000 by Voyageur Press

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or used in any form by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or any information storage and retrieval system—without written permission of the publisher.

Edited by Michael Dregni  
Designed by Kristy Tucker  
Printed in Hong Kong

00 01 02 03 04 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-89658-496-8

Distributed in Canada by Raincoast Books  
9050 Shaughnessy Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6P 6E5

Published by Voyageur Press, Inc.  
123 North Second Street, P.O. Box 338  
Stillwater, MN 55082 U.S.A.  
651-430-2210, fax 651-430-2211  
books@voyageurpress.com  
www.voyageurpress.com

*Educators, fundraisers, premium and gift buyers, publicists, and marketing managers:* Looking for creative products and new sales ideas? Voyageur Press books are available at special discounts when purchased in quantities, and special editions can be created to your specifications. For details contact the marketing department at 800-888-9653.

**On the endpapers:** A Twin City tractor and its faithful crew.

**On the frontpiece:** Everyone was excited by the arrival of the family's new Massey-Harris tractor, as pictured on this 1950s Massey *Buyer's Guide*.

**On the title pages:** A 1930s Oliver 70 Row Crop advertising painting by M. E. Swenson.

**On the acknowledgments page:** A happy farm family with their Minneapolis-Moline U tractor. (Minnesota Historical Society)



# Acknowledgments



Our thanks to all who helped make this book come to life: John O. Allen of J. C. Allen & Son; Keith Baum; Ken Gianini of the Minnesota State Fair; Jerry Irwin; Andy Kraushaar; Andrew Morland; Robert N. Pripps; Paul Rezendes; Les Stegh of Deere & Company; and everyone at Voyageur Press who helped dream up uses for old tractors.



# 101 Uses for an Old Farm Tractor



The glories of the farming life, from  
a 1920s Case brochure.







# Baby Buggy

A budding young tractor driver checks out the ergonomics of the latest John Deere at the Minnesota State Fair in the 1960s.







After a hard day working in the field, a youngster catches a few winks in his homemade John Deere Model B wagon. (Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



If you're going to be a farmer, you better learn to drive tractor as early as possible. (Photograph © Andy Kraushaar)



## *Training Wheels*



How long you been driving tractor? A young farmer pilots his Massey-Ferguson 330 pedal tractor, pulling a miniature utility wagon carrying his younger brother. (Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



## *Dream Machine*



Like grandfather, like grandson. Allen Martin sits on his 1935 John Deere Model B while his grandson, Jonathan Martin, pilots a Model 60 pedal tractor. (Photograph © Keith Baum)

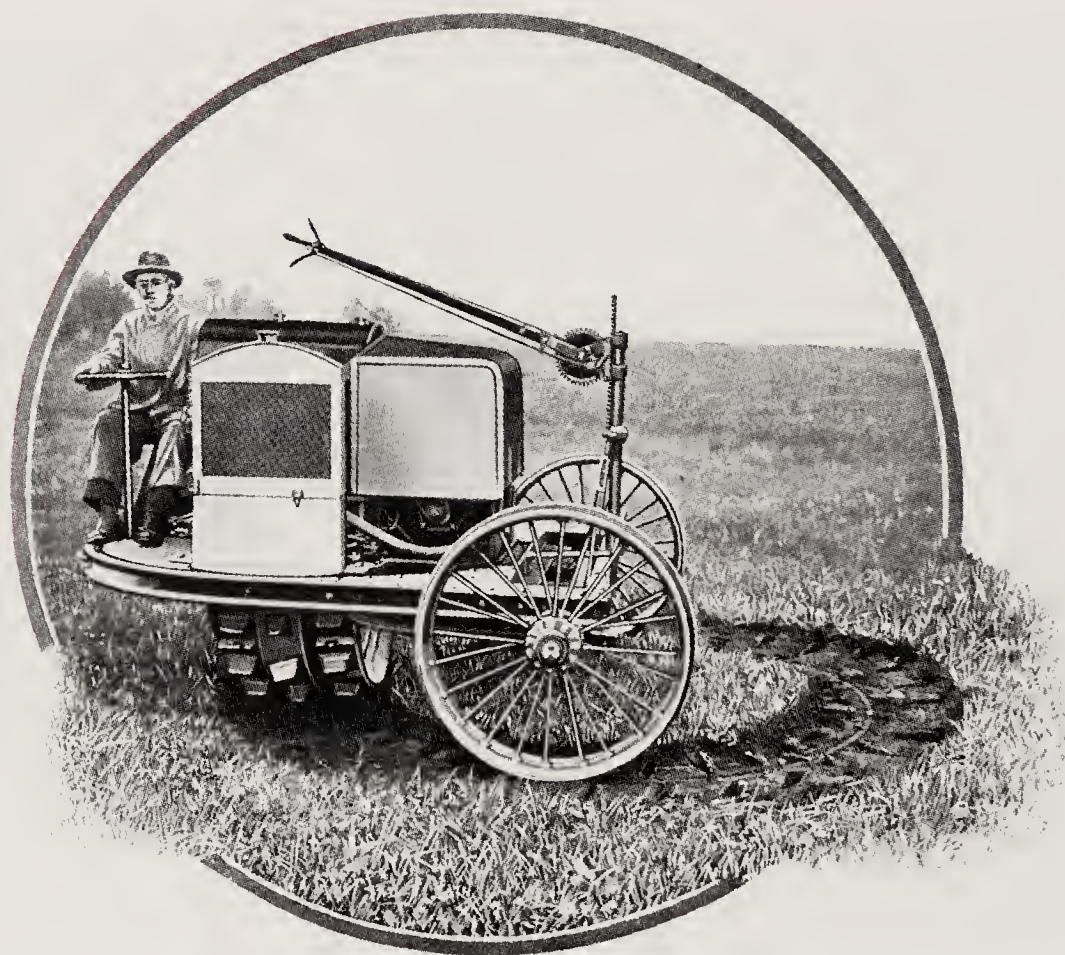


## *Barber Chair*



If you can't get them off their favorite Allis-Chalmers, you might as well put the situation to good use. (Library of Congress)

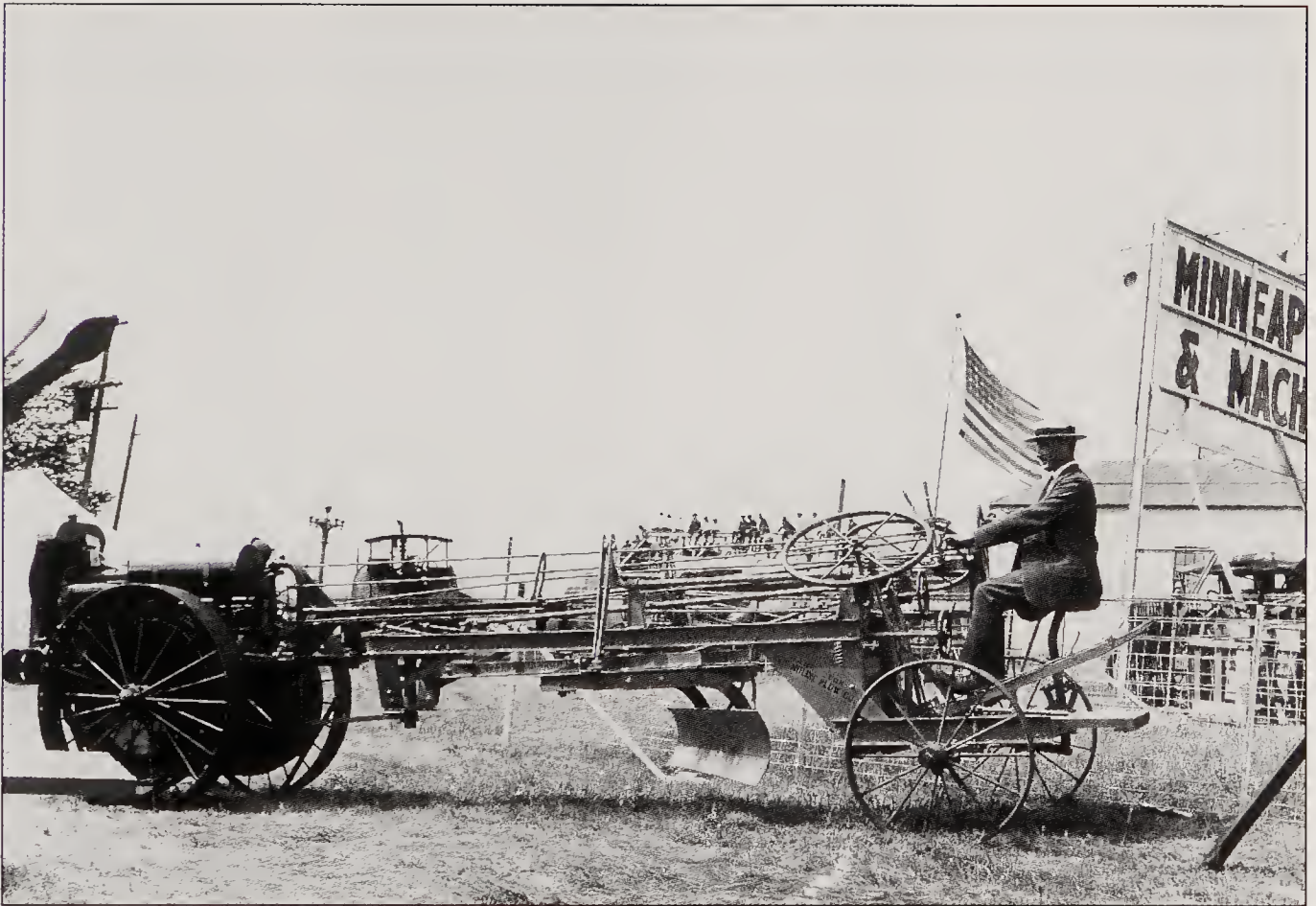
# Merry-Go-Round



The Short Turn 20/30 tractor of 1916–1918 could turn around within its own track at the end of a row. It was the brainchild of inventor John Dahl and was built in both Bemidji and Minneapolis, Minnesota.



## *Teeter-Totter*



The balance of components on this pioneering motor grader make it look as though it could have served as a precarious see-saw on weekends after it was finishing grading roads.

# Jungle Gym

A threshing crew  
takes a break from  
their work—or  
play?—with their  
steam traction  
engine near  
Stillwater,  
Minnesota, in  
1931.









## *Driver's Education Vehicle*

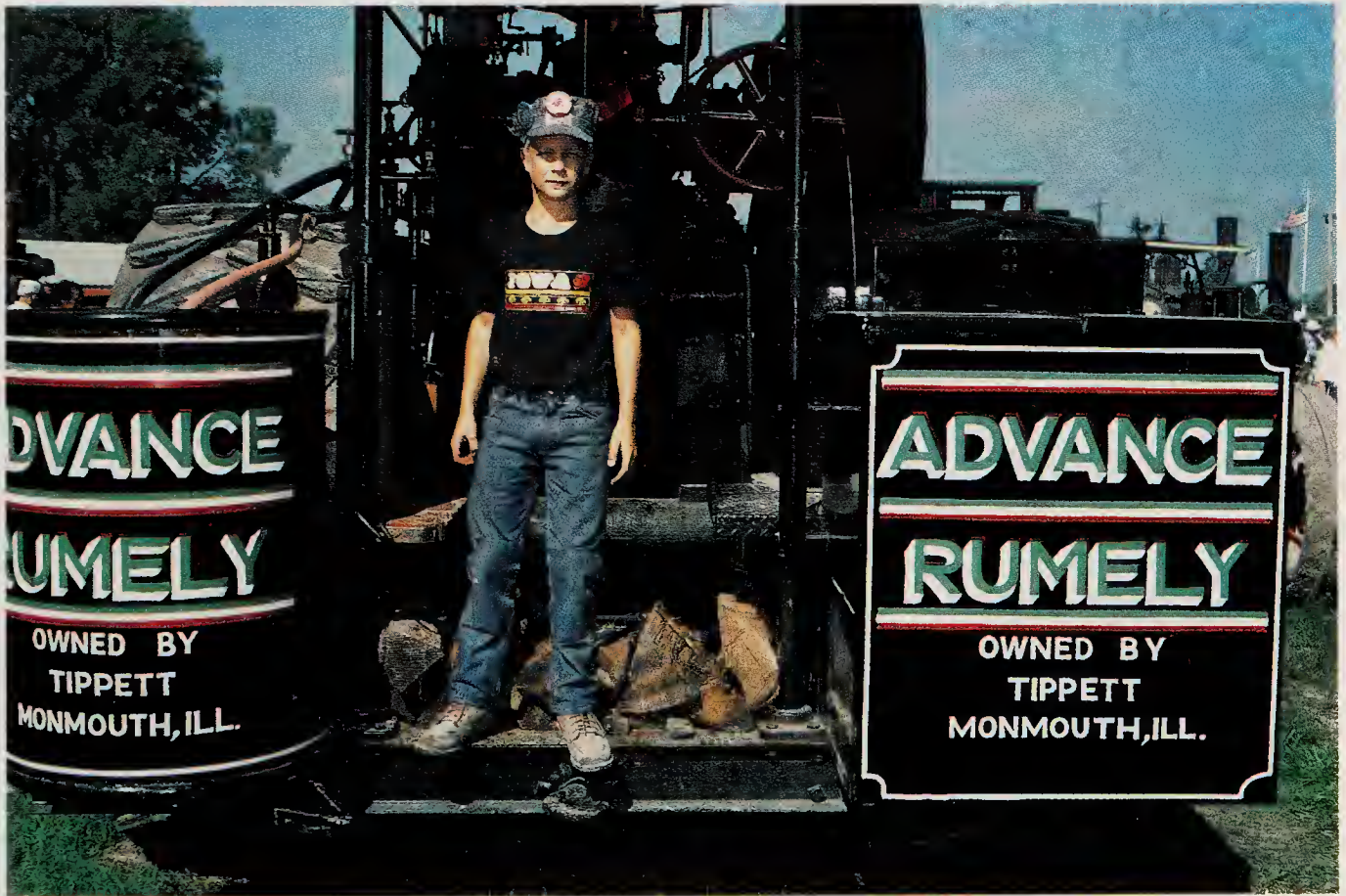


A youngster steers the family's Farmall Cub—with the reassuring presence of Dad sitting behind him should anything go awry.

(Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



## *For Making a Boy Feel Like a Man*



This threshing-bee veteran takes a breather from his work stoking the firebox of his crew's Advance-Rumely steamer. (Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



## Sunday Drive



The Johnny Popper was the ideal vehicle for a Sunday drive—but everyone came rushing home when the dinner bell rang. Artist Walter Haskell Hinton's painting captured the farmwife's call to the table in an image that appeared in a classic John Deere calendar. (Deere & Company)



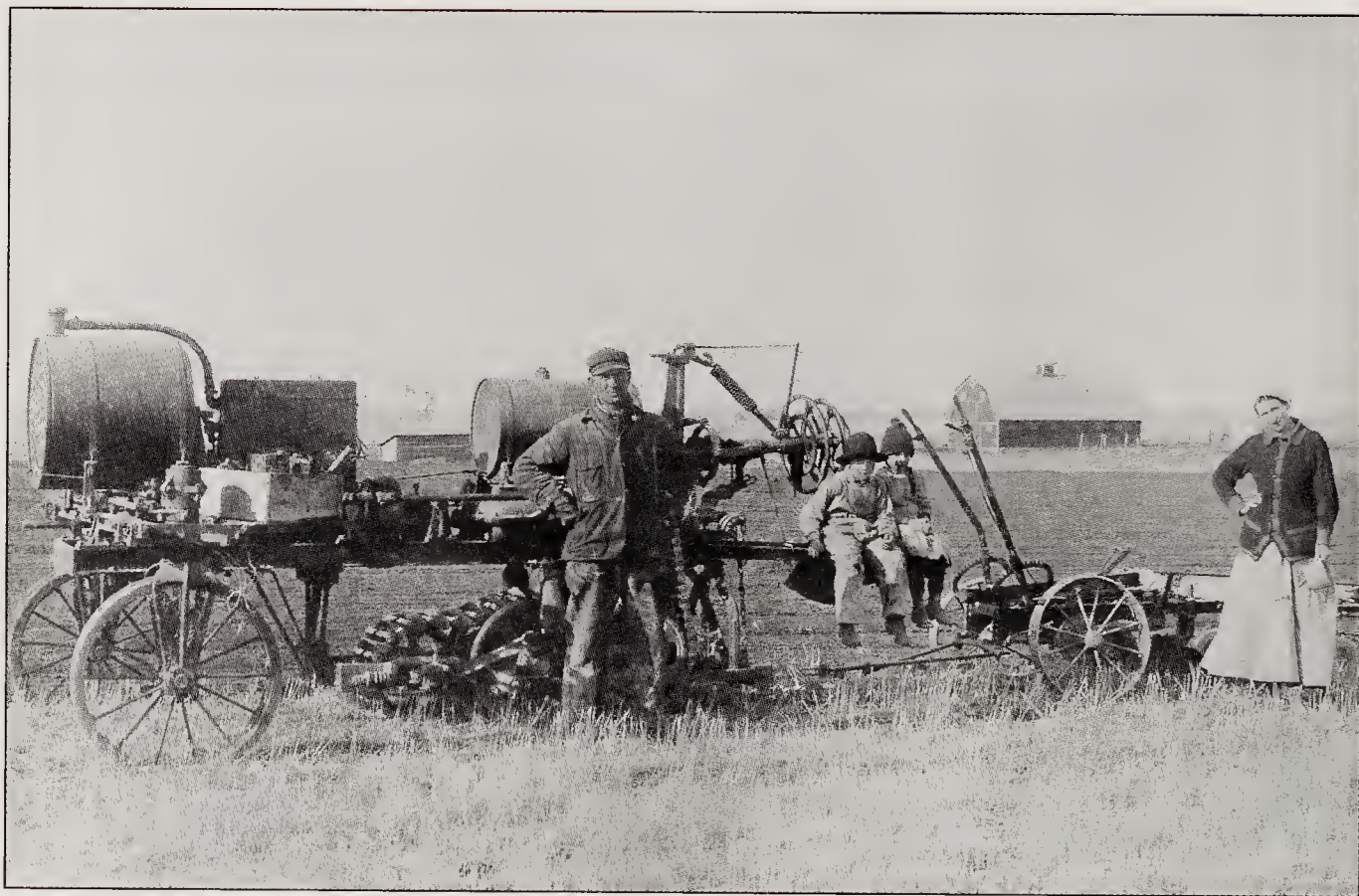
## *Family Car*



Farmer Harry Wood and family stand proudly in front of their Minneapolis-Moline UDLX Comfortractor in 1938. M-M marketed the U-Deluxe as a tractor for the whole family: It could plow fields during the week and then be driven to church on Sunday.

(Minnesota Historical Society)

## *Family Vacation Vehicle*



Pack up your troubles and get away from it all! The Joliet Tractor Company's "half-track" machine of the 1910s could take you anywhere you wanted to go.



## *Family Pet*



The whole gang gathers around its Ford NAA Golden Jubilee tractor and makes it feel part of the family.



## *Show and Tell*



The family's Minneapolis-Moline UDLX Comfortractor was always the hit of show and tell at school—and in the days before the fad of crowding into telephone booths, you could always see how many friends fit into the U-  
Deluxe's novel new cab! (Minnesota Historical Society)



# *Charles Atlas* *Muscle* *Builder*



Building muscles  
the hard way, a  
youth cranks over  
the engine on his  
family's Case  
tractor in the days  
before starter  
motors became  
common accesso-  
ries. (Photograph  
© J. C. Allen &  
Son)



# *Women's Liberator*



Tractors—such as this Minneapolis-Moline Z—gave farm women power.





Tractors were often a first car for farm youths — although they were rarely allowed to drive the machines far from the fields that needed plowing.

(Photograph © J. C. Allen & Son)

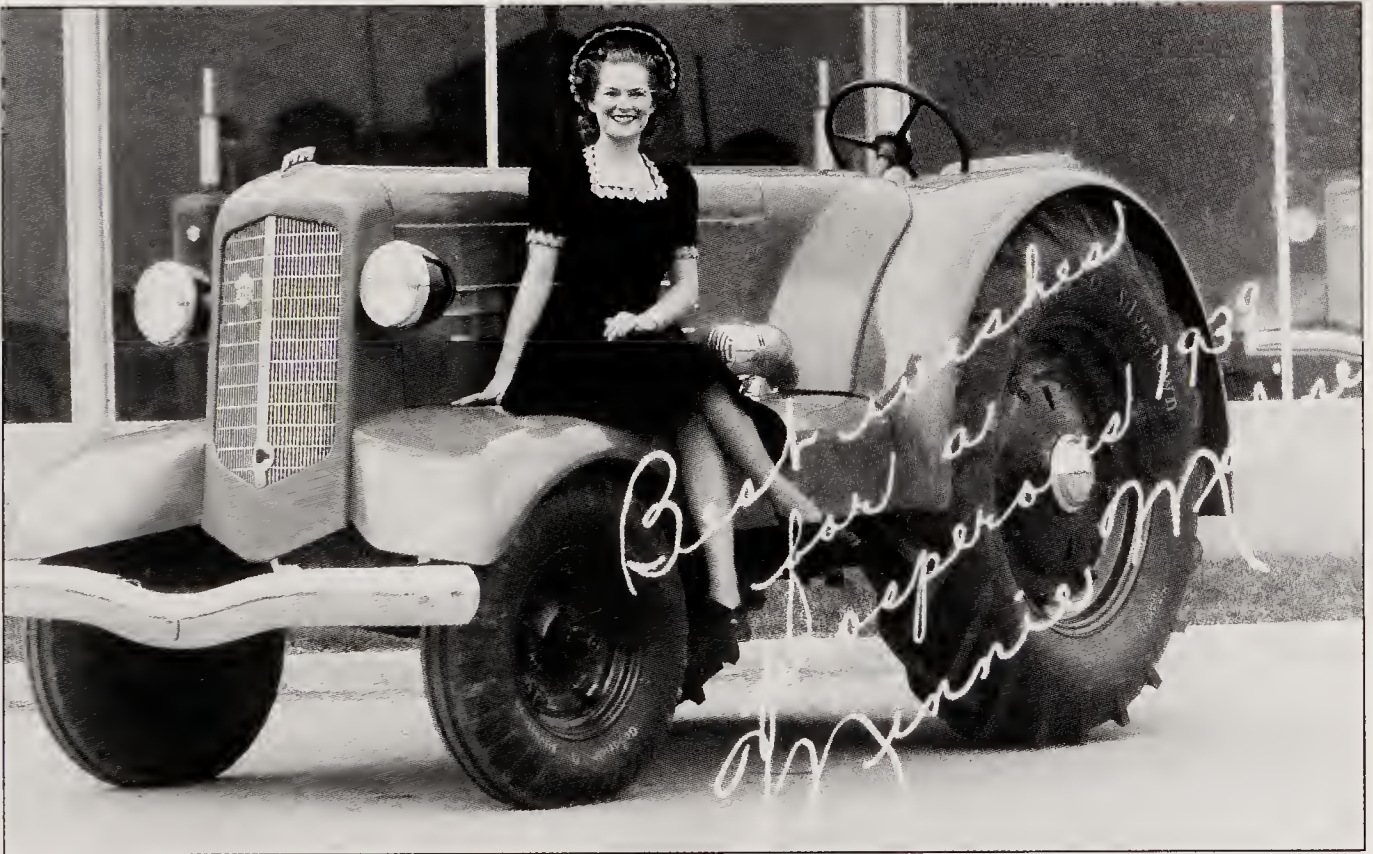


# *For the Rebel Without a Cause*

When your parents wouldn't allow you to buy a motorcycle, the family's Fordson Major had to substitute as a ride with attitude. Just remember: Even James Dean grew up on a farm.







“Minnie Moline” was the pin-up of choice for tractor-smitten farm youths everywhere. Here, she poses on a 1939 Minneapolis-Moline UDLX, although without its famous enclosed cab. (Minnesota Historical Society)



## *Pick Up Girls*



The latest Massey-Harris was the ideal machine to catch the eye of that certain special lady.



## *Pick Up Guys*



No man could resist a Johnny Popper. This painting by artist Walter Haskell Hinton pictured the men going off to World War II while the women took over in the fields. (Deere & Company)



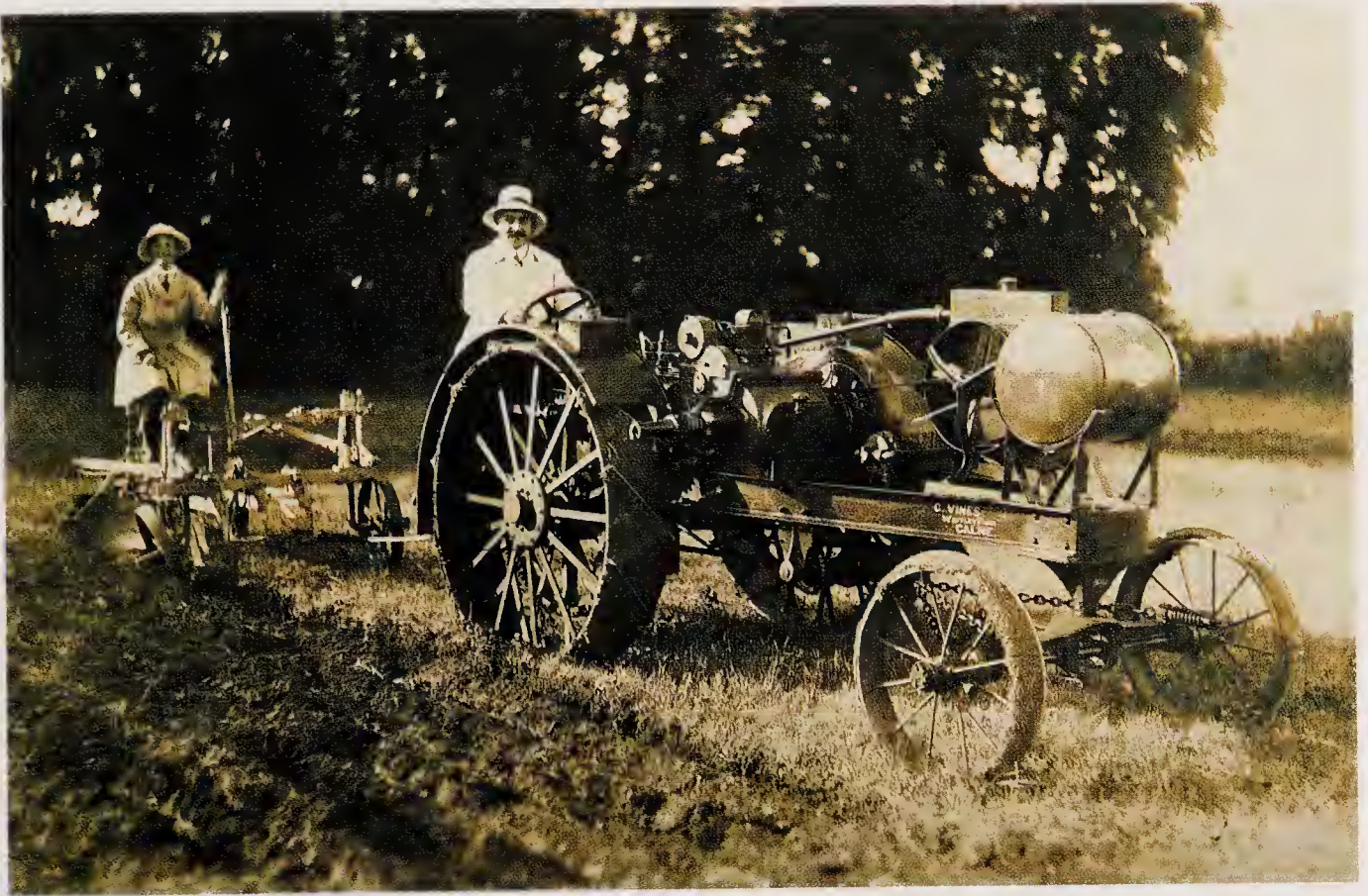
## Hot Date



Few dates were as romantic as a trip to the local fair's Machinery Hill to check out the latest and greatest in tractors.  
(Minnesota State Fair collection)



## *Romantic Getaway*



If you played your cards right with your Waterloo Boy–Overtime tractor, romance could blossom—and you could get some needed plowing done at the same time.









## *Honeymoon Vehicle*

A homemade “Doodle Bug” was  
the perfect “starter tractor” for a  
young couple setting off on their  
new married life together.  
(Glenbow Archives)



## Recreational Vehicle



With the day's work done, the Massey-Harris was the ideal vehicle to get you to the old fishing hole in a flash.



## *Convertible*

Chic Cadillac rag-tops and convertible '57 Chevys had nothing on tractors when it came to top-down motoring. Kenneth Anderson's 1940s John Deere Model H could also double as a beach hut or lifeguard stand. (Photograph

© Andrew Morland)

## *Beach Hut*





# Fishing Guide



The Johnny Popper was the perfect craft to take you where the big ones were biting. The manure spreader could double as a bait bucket.  
(Deere & Company)

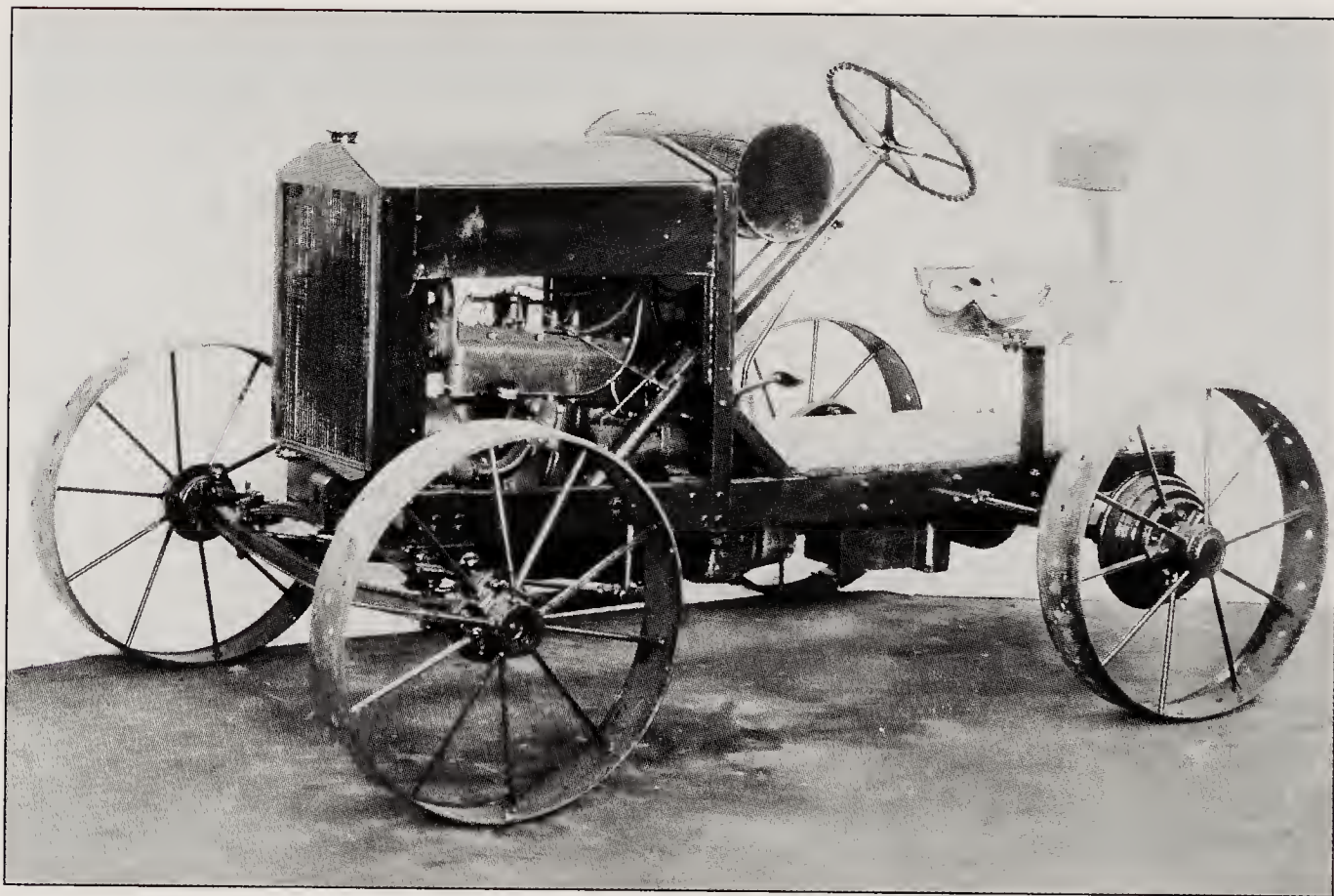




When the links are calling, Jack Gustafson's 1941 Allis-Chalmers WF makes the ideal caddy cart, complete with umbrella.  
(Photograph © Andrew Morland)



## Space Probe



Forget \$50 hammers and \$200 toilet seats! This 1931 Ford-based Doodle-Bug could be the perfect lunar exploration vehicle for the space program on a budget. (Minnesota Historical Society)





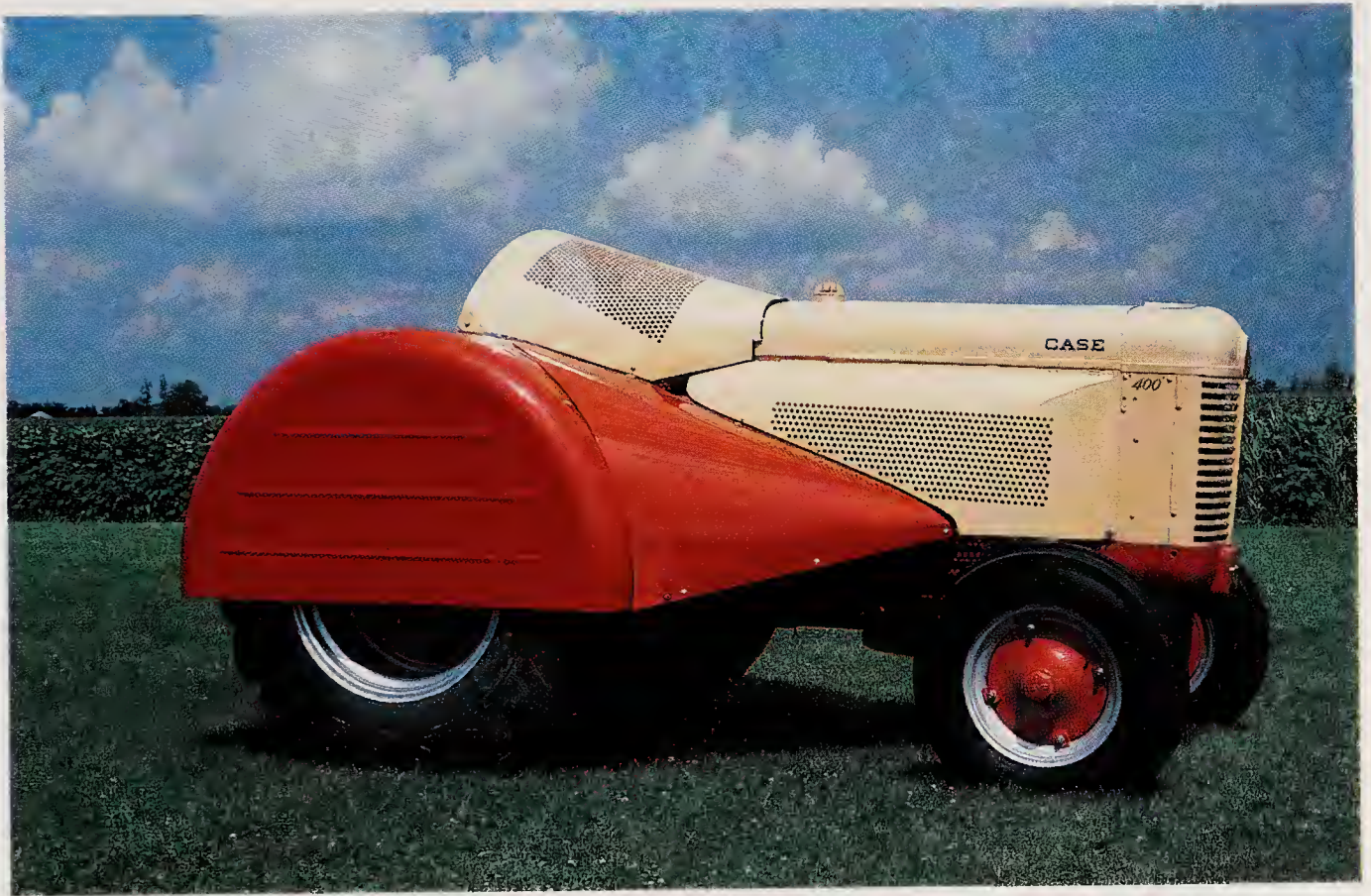
When you want to ride in style, nothing impresses like the family's steam tractor. Ma or Pa make a good chauffeur. (Photograph © Jerry Irwin)





The 1937 McCormick-Deering O-12 Orchard shared its color scheme and swoopy styling with the exotic Italian sports car. At speed, Ferraris and IH orchard machines could sometimes be confused, even by old-timers.  
(Photograph © Andrew Morland)





Curvaceous bodywork was the rule for the 1955 Case 400 Orchard and the German Porsche sports car. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)



## *Land Speed Recordsetter*



Eighty-eight miles in a mere five hours and one minute? With rubber tires on your Allis-Chalmers, who knew what record would be broken next! The one thing you could be sure of is that goggles were essential to keep the bugs out of your eyes. (Minnesota Historical Society)



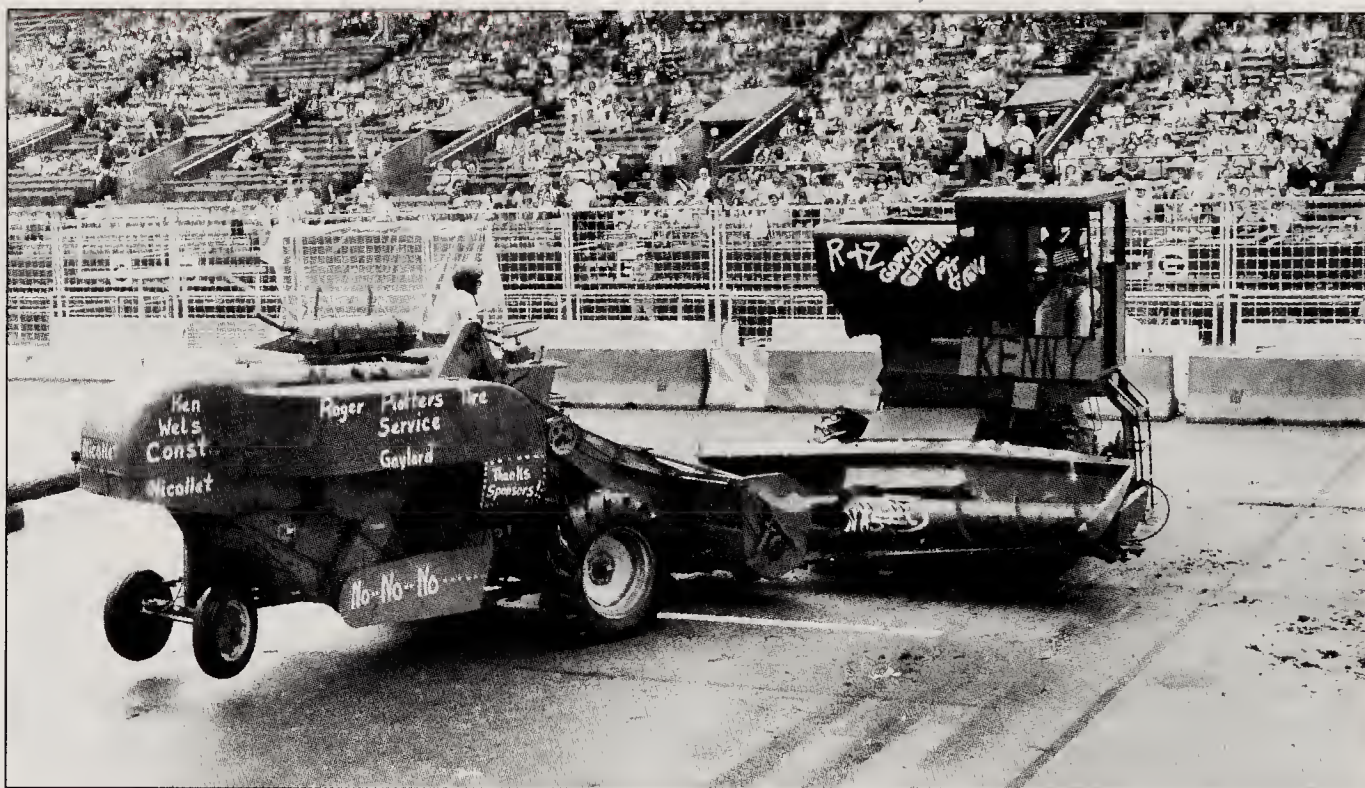
## *Slow Vehicle Race*



On your mark, get set, crawl! International Harvester's lineup of T-4, T-5, and TD-5 crawlers were the perfect "racers" for a slowest-moving vehicle dash.



# Demolition Derby



Rather than let the old combine rust away in a back pasture, enter it in the local combine demolition derbies. These derbies offered the perfect outlet for a farmer's frustrations for every time the combine broke down. This contest of agricultural gladiators took place at the Minnesota State Fair in the 1970s before a crowded grandstand. (Minnesota Historical Society)





Fitted with a Ford Flathead V-8 engine, Palmer Fossum's 1952 Funk-Ford 8N was a hot-rodder's dream come true. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)



## *James Bond 007 Secret Agent Vehicle*



The Minneapolis-Moline UDLX boasted the latest gadgets for all debonaire secret agents of the farmyard. (Minnesota Historical Society)



## *Stealth Fighter*



The slippery lines and low-flying capability of Dan Buckert's 1947 Case VAO Orchard help it elude radar. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)





The John Deere 3020 Orchard was easily mistaken for an unidentified flying object in low light, such as when it returned from work at dusk. This may have given rise to many rumored alien sightings.



## *Hang Glider*



With a good wind underneath its overhead wing, the Ford 861 Powermaster could soar forever. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)



## *Fashion Accessory*



Nothing made a fashion statement for the well-dressed farmer like the new John Deere Model A with Roll-O-Matic front end.



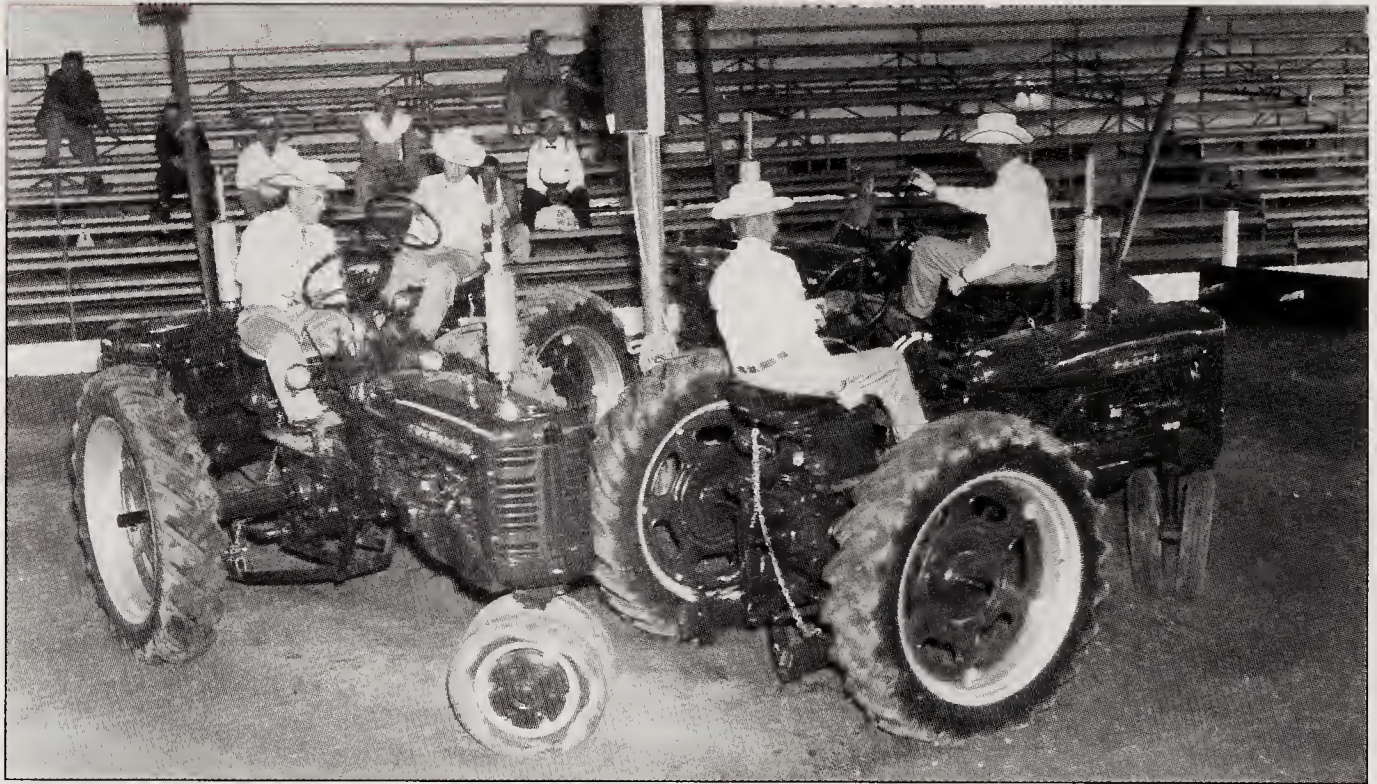
*For When You're All Dressed Up  
But Have Nowhere to Go*



You've got on your best Sunday suit and bowler hat but have nowhere to strut your stuff. . . . Might as well plow the back forty.  
(Minnesota Historical Society)



## Square Dancing



The Farmall Fast-Hitch Square Dance Kids toured North America performing their mechanized versions of the tried-and-true hoe-down at state and county fairs everywhere. The quartet of Farmall 200 tractors “danced” their repertoire of twenty basic square dance “steps.” If this didn’t sell you on the fleet-footedness and tight turning circle of the Farmall, nothing would.



## *Chorus Line*



Arrayed in front of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, factory, a lineup of 1937 Twin City tractors gets ready to strut their stuff.  
(Minnesota Historical Society)



# Lawn Chair

When the day is  
done, the hood of  
your John Deere is  
a fine place to put  
your feet up.





# *La-Z-Boy*



Might as well make  
yourself comfort-  
able when you  
have long hours  
ahead of you in the  
field. (Photograph  
© J. C. Allen &  
Son)







## *Poolside Lounge Chair*

Nothing was better for cooling off after a long day in the tractor's seat than a dunk in the watering trough. And when you were done swimming, your tractor made an ideal deck chair for soaking up the sun's rays. (Photograph © J. C. Allen & Son)







Some folks see an old tractor as the ideal lawn ornament. Others view it as nothing but fertilizer, rusting back into the earth from which it came.  
(Photograph © Keith Baum)



## *Planter*

A retired John Deere boasts many benefits as a tree planter, helping your seedlings grow straight and true.  
(Photograph © Andy Kraushaar)





# Guard Dog

With its bulldog  
stance, a 1952 Ford  
8N will keep  
burglars away.  
(Photograph ©  
Andrew Morland)





# *A Place to Stop and Smell the Roses*



Far from the hectic  
pace of life, there  
are few places  
better to stop and  
smell the roses —  
or at least to  
contemplate the  
dandelions — than  
a retired tractor.  
(Photograph ©  
Andy Kraushaar)







## *Salt Lick*

For some reason, Bossie always seems to like the taste of an old tractor. And after a lick or two, your favorite machine serves double duty as a backscratch. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)







The mammoth wheels of a John Deere articulated four-wheel-drive tractor make an ideal spot for a nap—or bunkhouse when unexpected guests come to call.



## *Mobile Home*



In the days before RVs and mobile homes were mass-produced, home-made homes-away-from-home had to be jury-rigged by creative and far-sighted inventors. This “mobile home” filled the bill in the 1910s by using a Holt crawler for power. (Glenbow Archives)



## *Firewood Hauler*



To keep the farmhouse nice and warm in the winter months, best stock up on some extra-large logs with the help of a Daniel Best steam tractor.



## *Toothpick Holder*



Paul Bunyan would have been most pleased with this C. L. Best Model 60 and its load of wood.



## *Magic Tricks*



Before your very eyes, Allen Martin's 1935 John Deere Model B will transform into the Incredible Shrinking Farm Tractor!  
(Photograph © Keith Baum)



## *Tanning Booth*



Who needs one of  
those newfangled,  
artificial tanning  
booths when you  
have a John  
Deere Model A?  
(Deere &  
Company)





Nothing builds a mighty thirst in a farmer like long hours in a tractor seat watching the plow to make certain the furrow is running straight and true.

(Photograph © J. C. Allen & Son)



## *Lunch Whistle*



You could always let the crew know when it was time for a break with a steam tractor, such as this troop of Northwest machines from Stillwater, Minnesota. (Photograph by John Runk/Minnesota Historical Society)



## *Moonshine Still*



When crop prices hit rock bottom, there were always other—perhaps slightly dubious—ventures that could be taken on with your handy steam tractor.

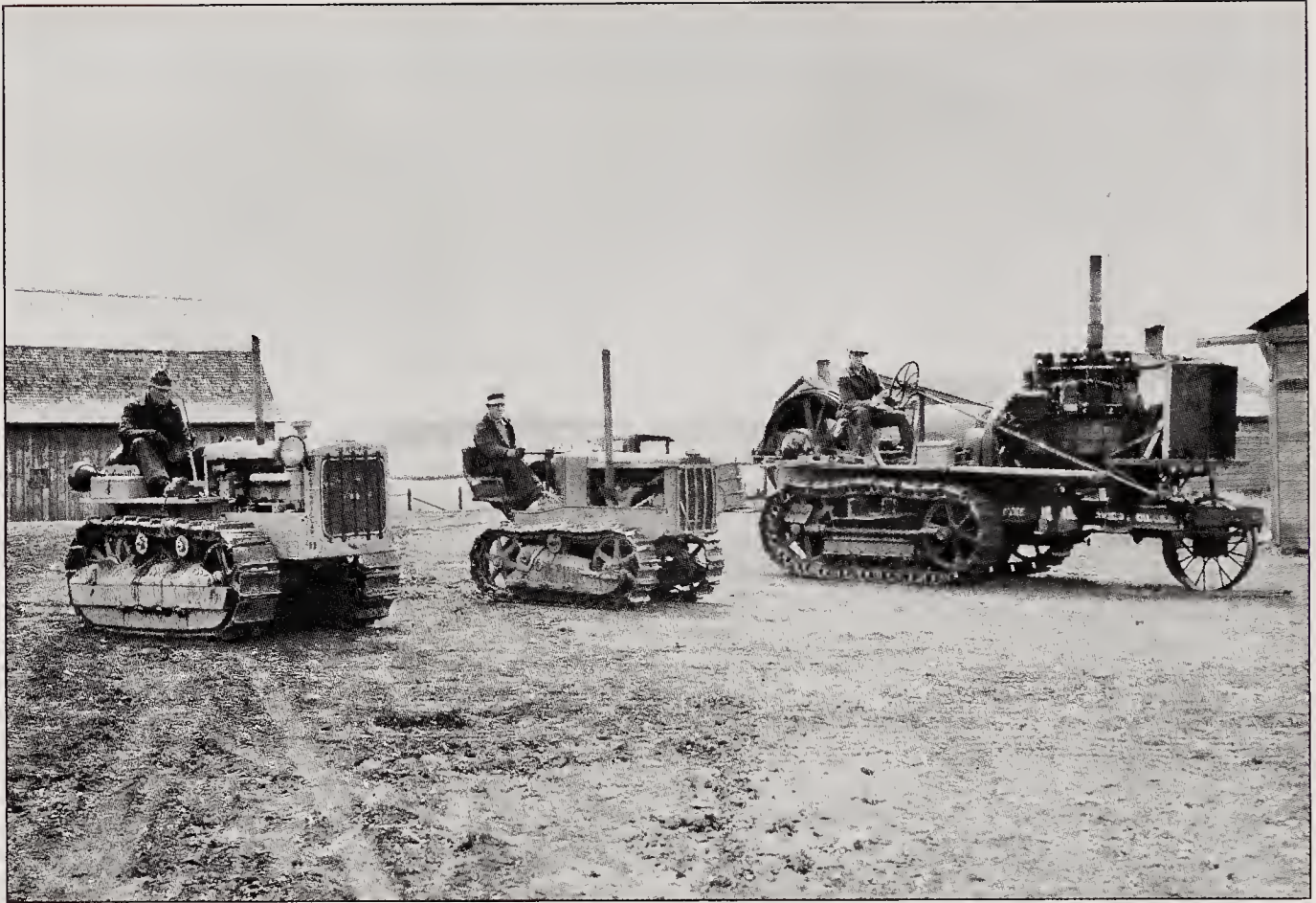


## *Air Traffic Controller*

In the early days  
of air travel,  
navigation was  
aided by a friendly  
wave from the John  
Deere “ground  
crew” working the  
fields. (Deere &  
Company)







Saddled up to set off in pursuit of a dangerous desperado, there was no terrain that could stop this posse of Caterpillars. (Glenbow Archives)



## *Tourist Attraction*



After many long hours on the road in the station wagon en route to Disneyland or Wall Drug, this family was eager to check out a fascinating International 706 Hi-Clear, making it an ideal roadside rest stop.



## Sleigh



With a trio of oxen to pull your Universal kerosene tractor over hill and dale, everyone was in high spirits to sing a rousing chorus of "Jingle Bells."



## *Christmas Tree*



Wrapped in Christmas lights, an International 1586 is a stirring sight at Yuletide. (Photograph © Paul Rezendes)



# Christmas Card



What better way to greet old friends and let them know what's up with you and yours at Christmas time! "Hauling wheat by modern methods" down here on the farm. (Minnesota Historical Society)



## *Christmas Present*



Santa Claus always had an inkling of what you wanted under the tree.



## *Ice Sculpture*



The family's old 1952 Ford 8N never looked more beautiful than when it was covered in ice and icicles during the winter months. You could even pull up a chair and just gaze at it. (Photograph © Paul Rezendes)





The streamlined fenders of Larry Maasdam's 1930s Caterpillar Model Twenty-Two Orchard made it look as though this Cat was designed to tend the ice. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)





A steam tractor belted up to a threshing machine always seemed to attract a crowd. (Glenbow Archives)



## *Emergency Repair Vehicle*

The John Deere D was always willing to take a break in its work so you could help out Soapbox Derby contestant in distress. (Deere & Company)

## *Soapbox Derby Racer*



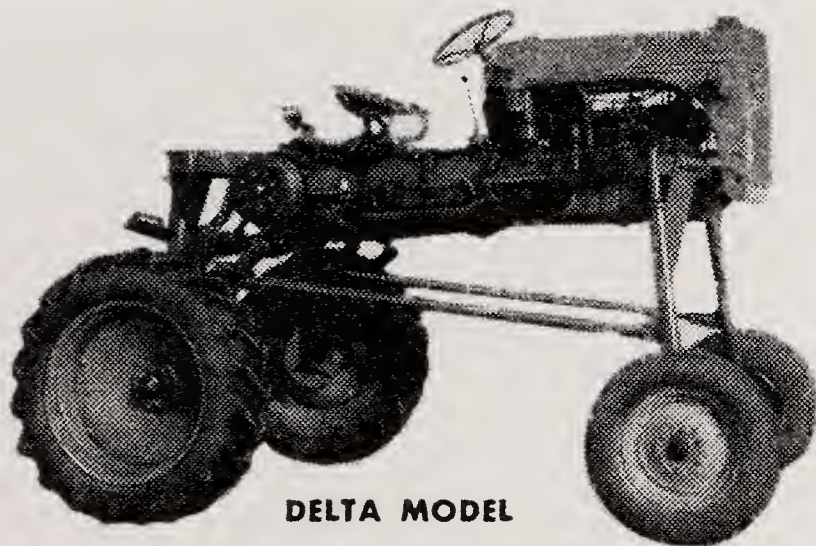




To some folk, the rusting hulks of a pair of Farmalls get the heart racing.  
To others, they start hands wringing: One person's treasure is another's  
junk. (Photograph © Andrew Morland)



## *Step Ladder*



**DELTA MODEL**

### ***Tractor Stilts***

*4½ Ft. Clearance*

*6 Ft. Clearance*

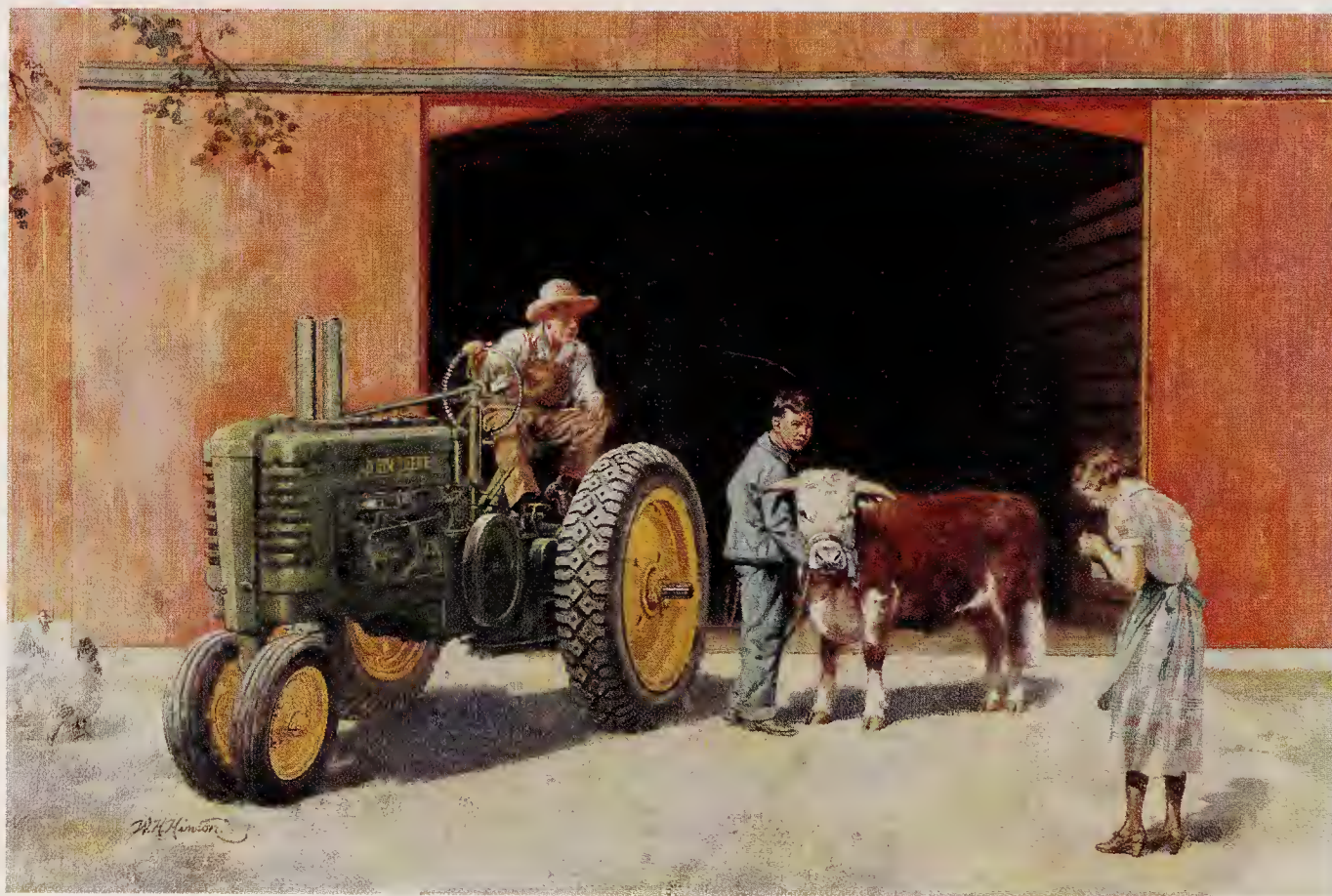
*For literature and prices  
contact*

**The Tractor Stilts Co., Inc.  
7205 Lawndale Dr.  
Omaha, Nebraska**

The Tractor Stilts conversion for your Ford 8N made it an ideal step ladder. Finally, just one farmer was needed to change a light bulb.



## Photo Opportunity



The Johnny Popper was a part of the family and appeared in many a family portrait. (Deere & Company)



## *Bird Feeder*

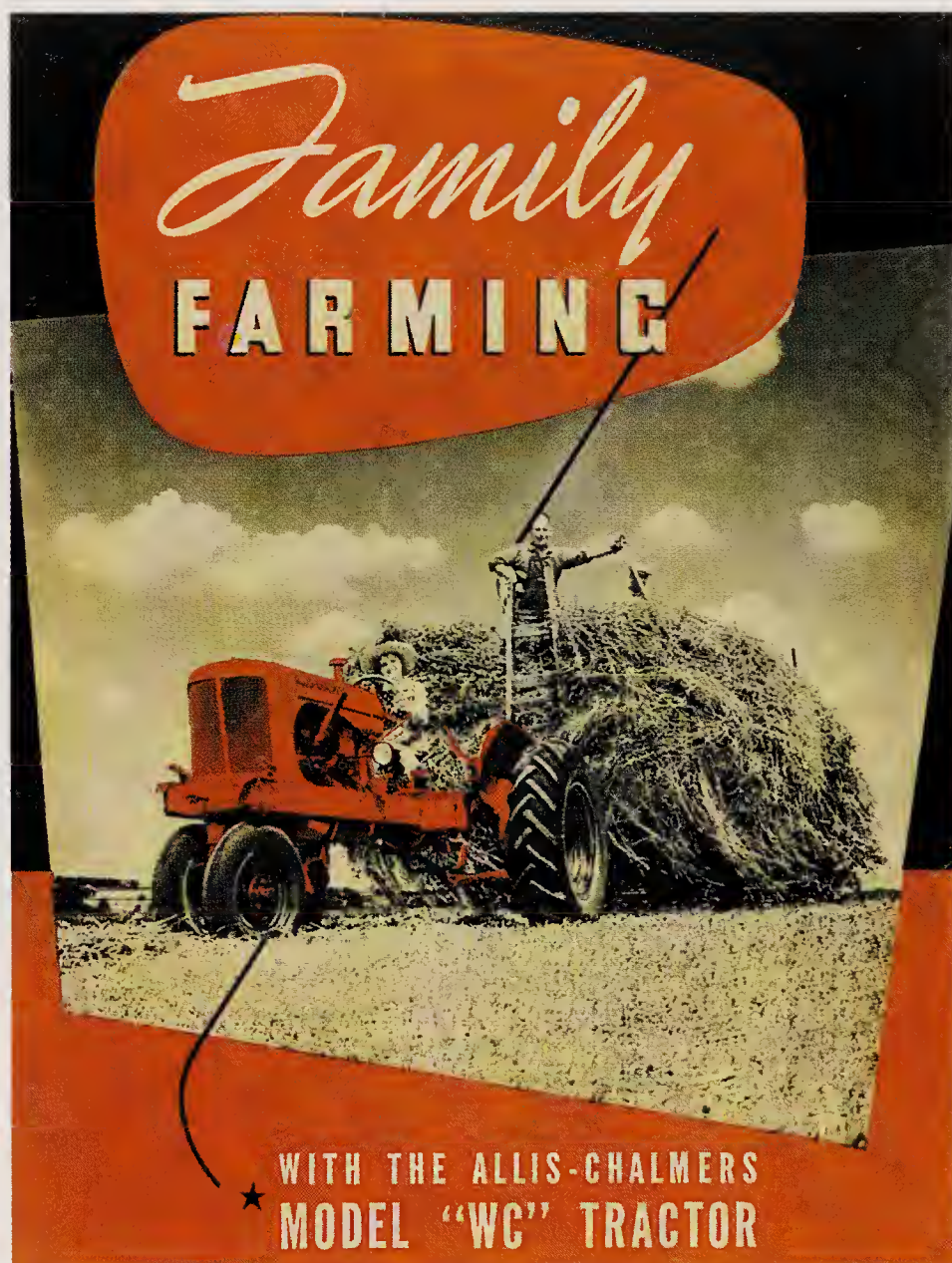


Plowing and seeding in spring offered plenty of feed for the birds, and whether you appreciated the sight or not, a tractor seat often made a fine perch for bird watching.



*For Making  
Hay While  
the Sun  
Shines*

Allis-Chalmers's  
WC was a tractor  
the whole family  
could enjoy.





## *Shade at the End of a Long, Hot Day*



The bigger the tractor, the more shade it threw—something that was always appreciated during lunchtime or at the end of the day.



# *For Being Pretty in Pink*

For some tractor buffs, pink is the color of choice, as with this Farmall H. (Photograph © Andy Kraushaar)





## Conversation Piece



John Deere's new  
Diesel Model R  
was the conversa-  
tion topic on many  
farmsteads.



## *Bragging Rights*



Who wouldn't want to brag about their brand-new Massey-Harris?



## *Middle-Age-Crisis Trophy*



Who needs to buy a Harley-Davidson or take up playing the saxophone  
when you could sit proudly on your Farmall H?



## *Room With a View*



Corner office? Office with a window? The view from the tractor seat was usually the best one around. (Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



## *Green Thumb*



Everyone knows that farmers—with help from their trusty Farmalls—  
have green thumbs.



## *Joy Ride*



Other folks have sports cars or muscle cars, but for farmers, the new Ferguson puts the biggest smile on your face.



# Memory Book

Many stories could  
be told about the  
olden days and the  
marvels of the John  
Deere Model D.  
(Deere &  
Company)





## *Barn Support*



Old barns often seemed pleased to have a tractor underneath them for support. (Photograph © Keith Baum)



## *Farmer Support*



Many old farmers were also happy to have that tractor underneath them.







# *One of the Ties That Bind*

The Johnny Popper was just one of  
the good things about the farming  
life. (Deere & Company)











## *Faithful Steed to Ride Off into the Sunset*

The sun sets behind an old farmer  
and an old tractor still going strong.  
(Photograph © Jerry Irwin)



# Happy Ending

An old tractor  
provided a happy  
ending to many  
a day.





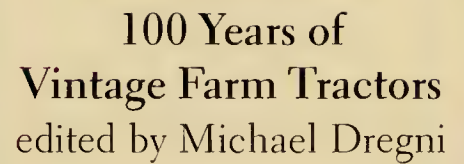








A black and white photograph of two men standing next to a large, vintage steam-powered tractor. The man in the foreground is wearing a flat cap and overalls, holding a document. The man in the background is wearing a hat and a jacket. The tractor has large spoked wheels and a prominent boiler.



**This Old Tractor**  
edited by Michael Dregni

Check with your local  
bookseller or order directly  
from Voyageur Press at  
1-800-888-9653.



# 101 Uses <sup>for an</sup> Old Farm Tractor

Voyageur Press



## *Mobile Home*

In the days before RVs and mobile homes were mass-produced, homemade homes-away-from-home had to be jury-rigged by creative and far-sighted inventors. This “mobile home” filled the bill in the 1910s by using a Holt crawler for power.

(Glenbow Archives)



## *Pick Up Guys*

No man could resist a Johnny Popper. This painting by artist Walter Haskell Hinton pictured the men going off to World War II while the women took over in the fields.

(Deere & Company)

Front cover photo © Roy Corral

For a complete listing of our titles, write us at:

Voyageur Press

P.O. Box 338

Stillwater, MN 55082

or visit us on the Web: [www.voyageurpress.com](http://www.voyageurpress.com)

Distributed in Canada by Raincoast Books

Printed in Hong Kong

Transportation/Americana  
\$14.95

ISBN 0-89658-496-8



9 780896 584969



0 91981 04

\*  
UQ-639-919  
\*